



SENATE NATURAL RESOURCES  
EMBIT NO. 7  
DATE April 3, 2009  
BILL NO. HB 674

Swan Valley Ecosystem Management & Learning Center, Inc.  
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April 3, 2009

Senate Natural Resources Committee

Re: House Bills 674 and 669

The Swan Ecosystem Center Board of Directors urges your support of Montana's family-owned timber mills and the acquisition of lands in the Potomac area. We have a remarkable opportunity to acquire former Plum Creek Timber Co. lands at an affordable price and support our timber industry through a revolving fund loan.

Much of the future of Montana's woods products industry revolves around the Potomac area forests. HB-674 will bolster Montana's timber economy and contribute to the school trust fund by allowing the purchase of approximately 25,700 acres of former Plum Creek Timber Co. lands. Public access for traditional hunting and fishing is important to Montanans as well. The recreation values are reason enough to purchase the Potomac lands and avoid their conversion to non-timber uses.

We must maintain our mill infrastructure. It is an absolute necessity for the long-term sustainability of our timber industry. It would be a disaster to lose nearby markets for logs removed from public and private forests for the purposes of promoting forest health and reducing the risk of forest fires. The HB-669 revolving fund loan is a wise tool, crafted to help our mills remain viable during poor timber markets.

Please take advantage of these remarkable opportunities to acquire the Potomac lands and support our timber mill infrastructure with a revolving fund loan by passing HB-674 and HB-669.

Sincerely,

Anne Dahl, president